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ABSTRACT

The traditional model for student teaching is based on a one-to-one relationship between the student teacher and the supervising teacher. However, by providing interaction with only one individual, the possibility for varied practice and feedback is limited. A model is proposed in which five student teachers work with one supervising teacher. The underlying philosophy is that a wider variety of interaction, evaluation, and feedback is possible with both peer observation and supervision by a master teacher. This model was put into practice for a period of three months with five selected students and their supervising teacher working together to strengthen specific behaviors and skills previously agreed upon. Student and teacher evaluations of the experiment suggested that more teaching time be allocated to the student teachers, and that the initial weeks be highly structured. It is concluded that while the concept of more than one student teacher under the direction of a supervising teacher is workable and can be successful, a student-teacher ratio of three to one would be more effective than that of five to one. (JD)

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# FIVE TO ONE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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## Introduction

Traditionally, student teaching has been based on a concept that views teaching as an apprenticeship system. In this model, the student or apprentice attempted to imitate or do what he was told to do by the "master teacher." Through this process of initiation it was assumed that the student teacher would acquire the master teacher's teaching skills, performance personality and attitudes (Stones and Morris, 1977, p. 8). The rationale for this was based on the assumption that if you want to be an effective teacher, then do what an effective teacher does. By having the student teacher observe and model a "master teacher" it was assumed that the essential skills would rub off on the student. However, there are some shortcomings with this concept. One is the assumption that a master teacher can be identified. If it is possible to identify a master teacher, then one must assume that this teacher excels in all the skills of teaching. It is questionable that a student can copy or use the teaching techniques of someone else, when the values, experiences and personalities differ.

In the light of recent findings about developing teacher behavior, the traditional one to one model for student teaching needs re-examination. Teacher behavior does not change by just watching someone else teach. It is necessary to specify behavioral objectives and provide feedback on progress made in attaining those objectives (Rife, 1973; Boehm, 1974; Darst, 1976). Peck and Tucker (1973) provide some key guidelines for teacher education. They suggest that: (1) objective feedback about specific aspects of teaching behavior is necessary, (2) feedback from fellow student teachers working in pairs has been found to be successful

in changing teacher behavior. Mackey, Glenn and Lewis (1977) not only confirm the finding of Peck and Tucker but also provide several operational strategy statements. These are as follows:

1. Teachers tend to be more effective when teacher behaviors are precisely stated in training exercise.
2. Feedback to teachers about their performances tends to increase their mastery of teaching skills.
3. Teachers trained with micro teaching techniques display more desirable pattern of teaching behavior.
4. The student teaching experience is more effective when supervisors are trained to work with beginners.

In addition, they point out that teacher trainees be provided not only with practice and feedback, but also with methods to analyze their teaching. Bush (1978) suggests that frequent, varied and criticized practice is important. The varied practice should include observation by supervisors and peers so that critical analysis and feedback can take place. Dodds (1979) has demonstrated that student peers can be taught to observe and record teacher behavior so as to bring about change in the students' teaching behaviors.

It is obvious that if one wishes to implement these newer concepts and techniques the traditional one to one student teaching model is not appropriate. Figure 1, illustrates this model and clearly points out a major shortcoming with it. That is, this model only provides interaction with one individual. The varied practice and feedback is limited. In this model the student teacher has only one other teacher to observe and with whom to discuss teaching performance.

TYPE FIGURE 1 HERE

A more effective model is one that Dodds (1979) describes as peer teaching. In this model students are assigned in pairs to do their student teaching. As seen in figure 2, this model increases the interaction possibilities.

TYPE FIGURE 2 HERE

In this situation the student teacher not only can interact with the supervising teacher, but also with a fellow student teacher. This enables the student to observe more than one teacher but also provides the opportunity for varied practice and feedback. The possibilities for varied feedback are increased because when one student teaches, the other student teacher and supervising teacher can observe and provide more feedback about the teaching performance. For example, the student teacher could observe pupil behavior and the supervising teacher could concentrate on the behavior of the student teacher. The resulting feedback would be helpful in pointing out how teacher behavior affects pupil behavior or vice versa. The variety of information that may be obtained is much greater than in the one to one model.

However, even the peer model has some shortcomings if one wishes to implement the principles as suggested by Peck and Tucker (1973) as well as Bush (1978). If one wishes to provide the variety of practice suggested, then it is necessary to have more student teachers involved. In considering the various possibilities we finally settled on a five to one model (see figure 3) for the following reasons:

1. A sufficient number of students would be available to provide varied and continuous feedback.

2. There would be enough students to be able to use the videotape equipment for microteaching.

3. The teacher at the school where the students were assigned was extremely interested in the concept and was willing to try it.

4. It met our immediate needs of placing an increased number of student teachers within a climate of less teachers in schools available to take students.

TYPE FIGURE 3 HERE

## Program Philosophy

In order to put the five to one concept into perspective it is necessary to understand the philosophy underlying our program. The fundamental principle is that we view teaching as a skill to be learned. This skill is made up of five components as shown in figure 4 below.

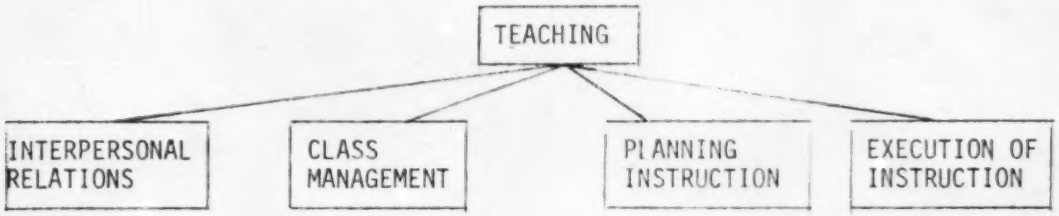


FIGURE 4: COMPONENTS OF TEACHING

Practice teaching, if it is to be useful, must be planned with specific objectives as well as feedback provided about the progress made in relation to the objectives. To provide proficiency in the essential skills the practice teaching experience should provide opportunities to practice the specific skills that make up each component (see Siedentop, 1976).

The basic assumptions that we follow are:

1. Teaching is a skill and is subject to analysis, change and improvement.

2. Practice in specific skills is necessary for improvement.

3. The environment can be structured to assist students in developing specific teaching skills.

4. Student teachers with practice can learn to critically analyze and control their own teaching behavior.

## Principles of Operation

Five students, three male and two female, were selected and assigned to one teacher in a primary to six school. The students spent four mornings per week for three months at the school. The selected students met with the faculty supervisor and the supervising teacher during the first week of September to plan the project. At that meeting the following principles were established:

1. Event recording, duration recording and placheck recording would be used to record teacher behavior.

2. Each student when teaching would be observed by a minimum of two peers. One would use event recording and the other duration recording. If a third student is available placheck recording would be used to record pupil behavior.

3. Micro teaching would be done once a week on the stage. Each student would select a specific behavior for attention and refinement. Each micro teaching session would be ten minutes in length.

4. Weekly assignments would be given on specific aspects of teacher behavior.

## Teaching Behaviors to be Developed

Students were informed that each was expected to demonstrate the following teacher behaviors (Siedentop, 1976):

1. The use of positive interactions for appropriate sutdent behaviors.

2. The use of positive feedback for skill attempts.

3. The use of specific feedback for skill attempts.

4. The use of first names in all teacher-student interactions.

5. The use of modelling and group directed feedback.

6. To interact on an individual basis with a minimum of 50% of the students in the class.

As part of the behavior analysis process, the student observers used event recording to gather data on the following behaviors: (1) use of first names, (2) use of positive interactions, (3) use of negative interactions, (4) individual interactions, (5) use of modeling, (6) use of managerial behavior, (7) use of general positive feedback, (8) use of general negative feedback, (9) use of specific feedback, (10) use of corrective feedback, (11) use of group feedback, (12) use of value feedback.

In addition, duration recording was used to gather data on class management time, instruction time and activity time. Placheck recording was used to analyze pupil behavior in terms of appropriate vs inappropriate, productive vs unproductive, active vs inactive.

## Project Evaluation

At the conclusion of the experience each student and the supervising teacher completed a report analyzing the project from a personal point of view.

### Student Feelings

1. Each student should be assigned specific classes to teach as early as possible.

Initially, when the project started, students rotated in teaching the

various classes. This caused the students to feel frustrated as they felt that the change in classes created managerial problems.

2. Compatible partners are essential.

Although there were no personality clashes, the students emphasized that this aspect be considered. They even felt that students be allowed the option of choosing this type of experience rather than being assigned to it.

3. Observational analysis was extremely useful and provided valuable insight into the teaching process.

Students felt that having to observe and record peer teaching behavior forced them to become more aware of their own teaching behavior. By observing several peers teach, it was possible to compare the various styles of teaching and provided each student with several role models.

4. Constant peer feedback was generally felt to be valuable in making one aware of the progress being made.

There were two sides to this generalization. Although the students initially found the feedback useful, as time went on, they began to feel that some of the feedback started to become nit picking. This was probably due to the fact that there came a time when there was too much feedback. It takes time to modify teaching behavior and if one continues to receive feedback that indicates there is no change, it gets a bit frustrating and students start to get defensive.

5. Lack of teaching in comparison to other peers produced some anxiety and apprehension.

Although the students in the project were made aware they would teach less classes during their experience, nevertheless it did cause some of the students to feel shortchanged. It was stressed that quality, not quantity

of the teaching was the important factor. However, there still exists in the minds of most students that if one teaches ten classes per week that is superior to teaching five classes even with the better feedback provided.

6. Microteaching was found to be extremely useful, but a separate room is necessary to improve its effectiveness.

Students did their microteaching on the stage with the curtain closed. However, at times it was different to maintain pupil attention because some of them would feel they were missing out on the gym activity. However, in spite of this shortcoming the students really enjoyed the microteaching.

7. Receiving regular peer observation and feedback removed the apprehension of faculty observation.

Students normally get nervous and excited when the faculty supervisor appears. If there is one thing that regular peer observation does is it helps the student get used to being observed. As a result when someone new appears on the scene there is very little apprehension about being observed by the faculty. Since the same observation forms and techniques are used, in many cases the faculty observer confirms what the student has already received in terms of feedback.

Teacher Feelings

1. Initial weeks of teaching need to be highly structured for the students.

We made an error in underestimating the students. It was initially decided to try and gradually ease the students into teaching. However, this created some non-structured time and caused boredom to set in.

2. From the teacher's point of view five students is a manageable number if the teacher and faculty supervisor are well organized.

It is essential that each student be given specific tasks and responsibilities. This will avoid the feeling of not teaching as often as peers in other schools.

3. Giving individual feedback to five students on a regular basis can be difficult.

One way around this problem is for the student teachers to write up weekly self evaluations for discussion with the teacher.

4. During the initial week of teaching in September students should be assigned two consecutive classes.

This allows the supervising teacher an opportunity to get an initial impression of teaching behaviors. It also can give the student that feeling of early involvement.

5. With five student teachers there seemed to be a reduction in interaction with other staff members in the school.

If one wishes students to get involved in the school then perhaps having five student teachers creates a small clique and the students feel uneasy away from their peer group. However, this can be overcome by arranging classroom observations for the students.

## Recommendations

In the light of our experience we offer the following suggestions for student teaching:

1. Peer student teaching is practical and effective. Do prepare your students ahead of time with the necessary observation skills.

2. Do structure behavioral analysis into the experience. This forces students to look at teaching from a technical point of view and makes them aware of the various teacher behaviors.

3. If you have access to the technology, micro teaching is effective and enjoyable, use it.

4. Five to one student teaching is perhaps tco difficult to operate effectively. We have gone to a three to one model and find it as effective, but less hectic on everyone concerned.

5. It is necessary to not only prepare your students, but also the supervising teachers for behavioral analysis. The three to one model will only work with a teacher who is willing to work with two or more students.

6. Experiment with a small group of students when you wish to implement a new approach. Students should feel it will be as effectove as to the approach presently used, if not, a negative attitude could destroy any chance for change.

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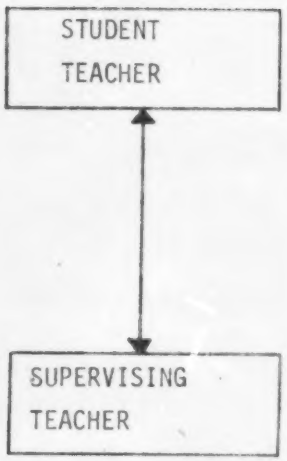


FIGURE 1: TRADITIONAL STUDENT TEACHING MODEL

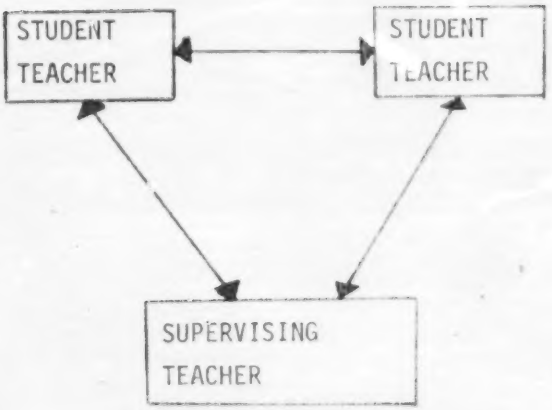


FIGURE 2: PEER STUDENT TEACHING MODEL

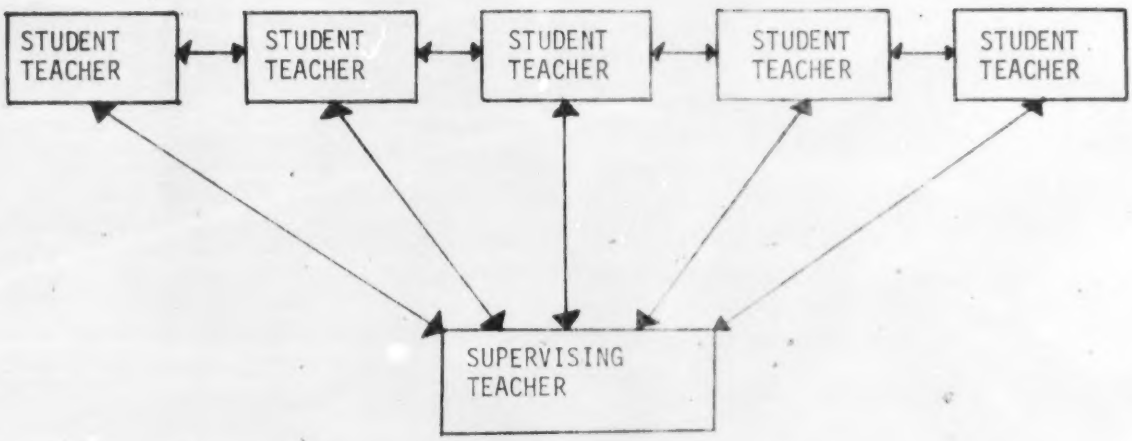


FIGURE 3: FIVE TO ONE STUDENT TEACHING MODEL